Persuasive Speech

Specific subject: Eating healthy
Specific purpose: To persuade the audience to eat healthy

Introduction (attention)
I. Attention getter: Have you heard of the freshman fifteen? Is it true? Does the average college freshman actually gain 15 pounds? Or is it a myth? According to a Web MD article written by M.D. Kathleen Zelman called “Diet Myth or Truth: The Freshman 15” in 2011, “…it’s a little bit of both…”

II. Thesis statement: Regardless of whether this 15 pounds of weight gain is fact or fiction, who could argue that eating healthier is not a good idea? Today, I am going to prove to you that eating healthier is easier than you think, and that it makes sense.

III. Speaker credibility: After extensive research on the matter, I am here to encourage you all to engage in an effort to eat healthier foods.

IV. Preview of main points: I will show you that there is a need to eat healthier, an easy and straightforward plan to help you accomplish this, and the benefits you receive from eating healthy.

Body
I. First main point (need): Let me start by discussing the need to eat healthier in college.

   A. When college students leave home and start to adjust to independent living, healthy eating behaviors are pushed to the bottom of one’s to-do list: still important, but not enough to be done well.

   1. According to the USA Today article “Beer, Bad Habits Fuel College Weight Gain” by Nancy Hellmich in 2008, 76% of females eat when under stress, which could explain why weight gain is most likely to occur due to a change in environment and an increase of stress.

   2. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services website Healthy People 2010 (n.d.), unhealthy dietary behavior is associated with 5 of the top 10 leading causes of death and unhealthy dietary behavior is one of the top six health risk behaviors identified in college students.

   3. The problem is that weight gain isn’t something that pops up overnight, it’s gradual.

      a. Sophia Breene (2013, August 6), writer for the Huffington Post, in her 2013 article “Why the ‘Freshman Fifteen’ is a Lie” pointed out that weight gained between the first day of freshman year and graduation was an average of 10 pounds. That doesn’t sound terrible.
b. However, Sophia Breene (2013, August 6) also argued that weight gain during college could be the beginning of continuous weight gain throughout the course of the student’s life.

4. To further this point, Dr. Ardith Brunt and Dr. Yeong Rhee, explained in their 2008 journal article “Obesity and Lifestyle in U.S. College Students Related to Living Arrangements” that the lifestyles we develop during these transitional years, which she defines as ages 18 to 24, can have long-lasting impacts on students’ health, and the health of their future families.

Transition: Next, I am going to show you how simple it could be to eat healthier.

II. Second main point (satisfaction): It’s not ideal to eat on campus; however, we still have options available to satisfy our need to eat healthier.

A. At the sub connection for instance, take an apple or banana instead of a bag of chips. Drink water instead of pop. It's really that simple.

B. It’s not ideal at Whitney either and it’s a little more difficult, but there are still better options available, like the salad bar or cooked veggies.

1. We also have the option to ask for dismantled food, by simply asking for a part of the original meal.

2. I know I do this.
   a. Instead of asking for white sauce on my noodles, I'll ask for just my noodles.
   b. It’s still not very healthy, but it’s better than it was.

3. I have also started grabbing apples at the sub shop instead of my usual ruffles cheddar and sour cream chips.
   a. It may not be what I’m craving but it is very simple to just grab a fruit, check out and leave.
   b. I don’t even think about it anymore.

Transition: There are countless benefits for eating healthy and I am only going to touch on a couple.

III. Third main point (visualization): Imagine making one small change that can improve your life in numerous ways…that is what the choice to eat healthier can do for you.

A. Cynthia Sass (2014, September 2) wrote an article in Health Magazine in 2014 called “5 Reasons to Eat Healthier that Have Nothing to Do with Weight” and I will explain these five reasons further.

1. Better mood: Scientists found that a higher intake of fruits and vegetables resulted in more energy, calm and greater feelings of overall happiness (Sass, 2014, September 2).
2. Sounder sleep: Numerous studies have ties better sleep to improvements in overall wellness, and foods tied to better sleep include fish, whole grains, nuts, and dark green leafy vegetables (Sass, 2014, September 2).

3. Better workouts: Scientists at the University of Nottingham found several healthy foods have been shown to build muscle, boost recovery, or improve endurance (Sass, 2014, September 2).

4. Glowing skin: A study conducted found that that people who ate more produce were rated as more attractive than those with suntans (Sass, 2014, September 2).

5. Improved brain function: I think we’d all be okay with that (Sass, 2014, September 2)!

B. In the health world, the Mediterranean diet is considered the best of the best.
   1. It includes a larger intake of fruits and veggies and a smaller intake of dairy and refined grains.
   2. Researchers found that over six years, Mediterranean diet eaters were 36% less likely to have brain damage, according to CNN reporter Elizabeth Landau in her 2010 article “Mediterranean Diet May Help Prevent Dementia, Study Says.”

IV. Fourth main point (action): I would like to encourage you all to pay a little bit more attention to what you eat.

   A. It doesn’t have to be all the time and it doesn’t even have to be strictly healthy foods, just simple changes here and there so it becomes a habit, second nature.

   B. And then, when you’re ready, maybe you'll take the next step towards a healthy lifestyle, whatever that may be for you.

Conclusion

I. Thesis restatement: Today, I hope you learned eating healthier is easier than you think, and that it makes sense.

II. Main point summary: Today, I have shown you the need to improve our eating habits by explaining to you about how the habits we develop in college have an impact on the rest of our lives, a straightforward plan to help you all eat better by changing little things when you eat, and the benefits of eating healthy a part from weight control.

III: Clincher: I’d like to conclude with a quote from Winston Churchill, “Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have.” And I’d like to think our health is greatest asset we have.
References


